

## Comment Form

## STATE DEPARTMENT

Title: Hague Convention on Intercountry Adoption; Intercountry Adoption Act of 2000; Accreditation of Agencies; Approval of Persons; Preservation of Convention Records; Extension of Comment Period  
 Subject Category: Intercountry Adoption Act of 2000: Hague Convention-- Agency accreditation and person approval

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Phase: PROPOSED RULES

How To Comment:

Commenters may send hard copy submissions or comments in electronic format. Commenters sending only hard copies must send an original and two copies referencing docket number State/AR-01/96 or State/AR-01/98 to: U.S. Department of State, CA/OCS/PRI, Adoption Regulations Docket Room, SA-29, 2201 C Street, NW., Washington, DC 20520. Hard copy comments may also be sent by overnight courier services to: U.S. Department of State, CA/OCS/PRI, Adoption Regulations Docket Room, 2201 C Street, NW., Washington, DC 20520. Do not personally hand deliver comments to the Department of State. Comments referencing the docket number State/AR-01/96 or State/AR-01/98 may be submitted electronically to [adoptionregs@state.gov](mailto:adoptionregs@state.gov). Two hard copies of the comments submitted electronically must be mailed under separate cover as well. Electronic comments must be made in the text of the message or submitted as a Word file avoiding the use of any form of encryption or use of special characters. If you submit comments by hard copy rather than electronically, include a disk with the submission if possible. Hard copy submissions without an accompanying disk file, however, will be accepted.

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Regulations.gov #: EREG - 9

Date Submitted: Dec 14, 2003

Title	First Name	Last Name
Mrs.	Cathy	Vanlierop
Organization Name		
N/A		
Mailing Address		
113 Memorial Pkwy		
City	State	Postal Code
Bellevue	KY	41073
Province	Country	

US

## Comment

I am writing today to offer some comments and a personal perspective in opposition to proposed legislation around the Hague Convention treaty, specifically as it pertains to American citizens' interests in international adoptions (reference bill id 22CFR Parts 96 and 98). For the last 3-4 years, my husband and I have been very seriously contemplating international adoption as a way to build our family. We had even gone so far as to make some preliminary deposits, which we have thus far donated to the adoption agency. The main reasons we have not pursued this to its completion center around some physical, but mostly economic circumstances. As a result, we have been forced to put this prospect on hold, hopefully just temporarily. We also face the reality that we are in our early forties and cannot take on a special needs child, which does not make us good candidates for the domestic adoption option. In reviewing the ways in which our government presently plans to implement the Hague Convention, it saddens me deeply to say that our dreams of building our family in this way, will very likely be thwarted as the financial burden will be too extreme for us to undertake. And I know that we are not alone in this issue. The costs to the adoption agencies to comply with: annual re-accreditations, homestudies performed by individuals with a Masters Degree in Social Work, the huge liability policy (that currently nobody underwrites), and tying up 3 months operating budget in reserve (to name a few) will be nothing short of astronomical. The domino effect will be that many agencies will have much longer waits for homestudies (lengthening the overall process) and many will not be able to absorb the financial impact and will be forced to close their doors. Once again, the prospective families and children to be adopted will pay the price. With fewer agencies, the majority of families will not be able to use a local agency (increasing all kinds of time, travel, and cost factors) and fewer children will be able to be united with a loving family. Specifically, in our case, the costs of an international adoption will sky-rocket (it's already a huge financial sacrifice as is) and will prohibit us from pursuing our dream to build our family in this manner. Further, there are no laws for domestic adoption that are comparable with those of the Hague Convention -- it feels like discrimination against those who wish to pursue the international rather than domestic adoption path, and, sadly for us, we will not be able to pursue either option. In closing, please let me say that I'm sure Congress and the State Department believe they are acting in the best interests and welfare of the children of the world. In actual practice, though, as presently proposed, these regulations would be extremely detrimental to American citizens who wish to build their families through international adoption and to the very parties they are supposed to protect. It is my hope that the parties involved would work to come up with more reasonable and realistic guidelines that would favor and support international adoption, rather than undermine and destroy the family bonds of international adoption. Thank you in advance for your consideration and action in this regard. Sincerely, Cathy Van Lierop